ON

PROVIDENCE AND FATE,

AND THAT

WHICH IS IN OUR POWER.

TO

THEODORUS, THE MECHANIST.

1. I AM of opinion, my friend Theodorus, that the conceptions of your mind are mature, and adapted to a man who loves the contemplation of beings; and I am gratified that you have thought fit to write to us on these subjects, though there are many among you that are able to investigate and doubt with you about such like problems. But it is requisite, as it seems, that we also should adduce[1] what appears to us to be the truth on the subjects which you have proposed for our discussion, and what we conceive to accord with things themselves, and with the

[1] The barbarous version of Morbeka has *insinuare* here, but the word employed by Proclus was, I have no doubt, παρεισαγειν *adducere*.

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opinions of the most celebrated of the philosophers prior to us; and that we should not in vain hear the inquiries of a man eminently skilled in mechanics, who was formerly known to us, as I conceive, and as you have asserted. You inquire however, about things which have been a thousand times investigated, and which in my opinion will never have any rest, because the soul is excited to the discussion of them, much light having been already thrown on them by the elaborate writings of Plotinus and Iamblichus, and prior to these by the divine Plato; and if it be not too much to say, such particulars respecting them have been proclaimed by the divinely-inspired mouth of theologists, as Plato alone has unfolded by demonstrations. And why is it requisite to adduce to you Plato, and men who were divinely wise, since they have been most luminously developed[1] by the Gods themselves, who transcendently know what pertains to themselves, and what they have produced, and have not been delivered by them in enigmas, as by theologists. It is requisite therefore, that we also writing conformably to them, should as I have said adduce to you what appears to us to be the truth respecting the subjects of your inquiry.

2. You deserve indulgence if looking to the all-various tragic and comic, and other connexions of human affairs, you have conceived that there is only one fabricator and maker of such colligations in the universe, and have called this Fate; or rather you have denominated it the series and consequent generation of things; have thought that such a dramatic scene is alone directed by some inevitable necessity; and have celebrated this as providence, and asserted that it alone possesses freedom of will, and is the lord of all things. But you have conceived that the freedom of will of the human soul is only a name, and is truly nothing, since she has an arrangement in the world, is subservient to the energies of other things, and is a part of the mundane fabric. Or rather, that I may use your own words, the human soul is a machine, since there is an irrefragable cause which moves all things that the world comprehends in itself. But

[1] "Differenter elucidata." So Morbeka; *differenter* being doubtless his version of διαφερόντως.

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the universe being as it were one machine, the whole spheres are complicated in each other analogously to certain drums, but the partial animals and souls that are moved by them, and in short, all things, depend on one mover. And perhaps in consequence of honouring your art, you have conceived that the maker of the universe is a certain mechanic, and that you are an imitator of the best of causes. These things however we have written, mingling the jocose with the serious.

3. Betaking ourselves therefore to the contest, we say, that the difference of these three things ought especially to be considered by you, if you intend to arrive at the gate of the subjects of investigation. And of these, the first indeed is, that Providence and Fate do not differ in the way in which you conceive they do, viz. that the one is a connected consequence, but the other is necessity, the cause of this consequence. For both indeed are the causes of the world, and of whatever is produced in the world, but Providence subsists prior to Fate; and all that is produced according to Fate, is by a much greater priority produced by Providence, but the contrary is not true; for in short,[1] the natures which are governed by Providence are more divine than those which are governed by Fate. The second thing is this, that the soul which is separable from the body, and which descends into this mortal abode from the Gods, is different from the soul which is in bodies, and which subsists in, and is inseparable from its subjects; and that the latter essentially depends on Fate, but the former on Providence. The third particular is, that the science and truth which are inherent in souls conversant with generation, though they may lead an immaculate life, are different from the science and truth in souls that have fled from this abode, and are established in that place whence they first fell, and descended into the realms of mortality. Of these three particulars therefore, as we have said, if you can discover sufficient solutions, you will obtain a satisfactory answer to your inquiries. For Providence indeed, differing in the above mentioned manner from Fate, it will be evident that many things escape

[1] "Summa enim totorum." This I suppose was in the Greek ολως γαρ.

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Fate, but that nothing escapes Providence; that Providence supernally governs Fate, produces it, and has limited its empire[1] by alter-motive natures, viz. by things which are allotted their first subsistence in beings that are moved by something else. But again, having shown that the soul which is separable from bodies, is different from that which is planted in bodies, it will be manifest to you which of these two possesses freedom of will, and that which is in our power; which is subservient to necessity, and is under the dominion of Fate; and where the complication of these is to be found, on account of which the one dulls the freedom of the will through a subordinate life, but the other participates of a certain image of election, in consequence of its greater proximity to a more excellent nature.[2] And science appearing to you to be twofold, it will be evident after what manner both Plato and Socrates, and to these also may be added the great Parmenides, assert, that the soul while here is capable of knowing truth, when it is purified from material darkness, and the passions introduced into it by the body, and its commixture with corporeal natures, but that it is allotted science in a greater degree, and in a more genuine mode, when it exists beyond bodies, and generation, and bitter matter.

4. These three problems therefore, being necessary and having been well discussed[3] by the ancients, partly by Iamblichus, in his copious and elaborate treatises On Providence and Fate, and partly by all the lovers of Plato, who proclaim that the soul is twofold, by Plotinus likewise in many places, and also by Porphyry, who make a distinction between contemplation, and contemplative virtue, and in short, by all who are able to understand Plato,—this being the case, it is necessary that beginning from the first thing proposed, we should discover the difference between Providence and Fate. "But in every thing, says Plato, it is

[1] "Separavit ejus epistasiam, id est superstationem." So Morbeka.

[2] Propter meliorem vicinitatem ipsi animam, in Morbeka's translation, should doubtless be, propter vicinitatem hujus animæ ad meliorem naturam.

[3] Accessibus in Morbeka, was I suppose in the original ἐφοδοις, expositions or discussions.

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requisite to know the one principle of that which is the subject of speculation, or we must err in every thing." It is necessary however, as the dæmoniacal Aristotle teaches, after inquiring *if a thing is*, to investigate in the next place *what it is*. If therefore, you inquired whether Providence is, or is not, and in a similar manner concerning Fate, it would be requisite in the first place to show you *that* each of them is,[1] and if you still doubted, I should be unwilling after this to answer your doubts, but since you acknowledge that both of them have a subsistence, and that all things are comprehended in their dominion, it evidently remains, I conceive, that I should demonstrate to you *what* each of them is; for from this it will be evident what it is in which they differ. And this being known, many of your doubts, as we have said, will be solved. But again, because to the discovery of *what a thing is*, the dividing method is said to contribute, which Socrates in the Philebus celebrates as the gift of the Gods to men, and because what are called our common conceptions contribute to the discovery of principles, from which conceptions it is possible, as Aristotle writes, to investigate many things that are demonstrable,—hence it is requisite that we also employing both these, should unfold Providence and Fate; so far as pertains to what we say they are, using common conceptions, but so far as pertains to other things, employing distinctly the divisions of beings, from which, as it appears to me, we can alone discover what the definitions are of Providence and Fate. But these being known will enkindle a clear light in the subjects of investigation, and will perhaps free us from the doubts by which we are at present detained.

5. The common conceptions therefore of all men, and which possess indubitable evidence, assert, that Providence is indeed the cause of good to those beings for which it provides, and that Fate is also a cause, but the cause of a certain connexion and consequence to those things that are generated. For that all of us have these irrefragable conceptions about Providence and Fate, is evident from our asserting that men who

[1] "Quia est utrumque," with Morbeka.

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are the procurers of good to others, have *well* provided for the subjects of their beneficence; and again, we denominate that which is evolved through many causes complicated with each other and unknown to us, no otherwise than *Fate*. Our life also is full of these names, because names testify the truth of these conceptions. For the word Providence (προνοια) indicates[1] that energy which is prior to intellect, and which it is necessary to attribute to *the good* alone; for this alone is more divine than intellect, because much-honoured intellect desires good, together with all things and prior to all things. But the word Fate (ειμαρμενη) indicates *that which connects all things that are naturally adapted to have such a connexion.* Moreover, that the thing which is provided for is not the imparting, nor that which is connected, Fate, nor that which proceeds into this, connexion, but that which connects, you may assume from this, that all of us conceive Providence and Fate to be certain productive powers. But every where effective causes are distinct from their effects: and these three things differ from each other, viz. that which makes, that which is made, and the energy of making.[2] Just as in what pertains to Providence and Fate there are, that which provides, that which is provided for, and the effective energy which proceeds from the providing cause into that which is provided for: and again, there are, that which connects, that which is connected, and the effective energy proceeding from the connecting cause into the thing connected. And it is evident that according to each of these triads, that which makes is not such as that which is made, but if the latter is various, it is necessary that the former should be simple, and that if the participant of good is the thing made, the maker should be imparticipable. For every where that which makes is allotted a part more divine than that which is made. When we say therefore, that Providence is the cause of good, we must also say that it is the fountain of good, which does not require to be benefited by other things. And admitting Fate to be the cause of connexion, we must not

[1] "Qualificat," with Morbeka.

[2] "Et sunt tria hæc differentia ab invicem, faciens, quod fit, actio." So Morbeka. But *actio* was doubtless in the original ποιησις.

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say that it is itself connected by other things. Such therefore, being the common conceptions which we antecedently assume of these two, it remains in the next place that we should consider what it is in which each of them excels [and by which each is characterized]: and first, in what the characteristic of Fate consists.

6. From these conceptions therefore, we infer that Fate is the cause of things that are connected. But let us consider what the things are that are connected. Of beings therefore, some have their essence in eternity, but others in time. By beings however, whose essence is in eternity, I mean those whose energy [1] together with their essence is eternal: but by beings whose essence is in time, I mean those whose essence *is* not, but is always in generation, or rising into existence, though it should be in generation for an infinite time. And the natures that subsist between these, are such as have their essence indeed permanent, and better than generation, but their energy measured by time. For it is necessary that every progression from things first to last should be effected through media. Since therefore, there are beings which are eternal both in essence and energy, it is necessary that there should be a middle extent, and that it should either have an eternal essence, but an energy indigent of time, or the contrary. The contrary however is impossible, that we may not confess that we place energies prior to essences. Hence it remains that the medium must be that which has an eternal essence, but a temporal energy. We say therefore, that we have exhibited to you these three orders of beings, the intellectual, the psychical,[2] and the corporeal. But I call the intellectual that which exists and is intellective through all eternity; the corporeal, that which is always rising into existence, or becoming to be, either in an infinite time, or in a part of time; and the psychical, that which is eternal indeed in essence, but which employs temporal energies. Where then, must the things which are connected be arranged? Consider assuming from the Gods the meaning

[1] "Operatio," with Morbeka; in the original ενεργεια.

[2] ψυχικην, with Morbeka *animalem*.

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of the term σιρεσθαι *to be connected*, as implying nothing else than this, that the natures which are differently produced according to time, are conjoined with, and not separated from each other. And if existing at one and the same time they are distant from each other according to place, yet they have a certain co-ordination with each other. Hence being separated either by places or times, they are in a certain respect collected into unity, and into one sympathy, through connexion. And in short,[1] the things which are connected, cannot suffer this from themselves, but require something else which may impart to them connexion. If therefore the natures which are arranged under Fate, are such as are connected with each other, according to our common conception of Fate; but the things which are connected are partible, being distant either in places or times, and are naturally adapted to be connected by something else, on account of the opinion of connexion which prevails among all men; and these are moved by something else, and are corporeal; for of the natures which are beyond bodies, some [i. e. intellects] are better both than place and time, but others [viz. souls] though they energize according to time, appear to be pure from place;—if this be the case, it is evident that the things which are governed and connected by Fate, are moved by something else, and are entirely corporeal.

7. If however this is demonstrated, it is evident that admitting Fate to be the cause of connexion, we must also admit that it presides over alter-motive and corporeal natures. But assuming this, we will ask ourselves what that is which is said to be the cause of bodies, which is proximate to them, and by which things alter-motive are inspired[2] and contained, and accomplish whatever they are able to effect. And if you are willing, looking in the first place to our bodies, let us consider what it is that moves and nourishes, and always reweaves, and binds them together? Is not this that which is innate in bodies, which also in other animals

[1] ολως; *totaliter* Morbeka.

[2] *aspirantur* in Morbeka, should evidently be *inspirantur*.

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exhibits a similar energy,[1] which extends as far as to things that are rooted in the earth, and possesses a twofold energy, *this* indeed renovating bodies that they may not by discerption entirely vanish, but *that* preserving the several individuals in a condition conformable to nature? For it is not the same thing to add what is deficient, and to preserve the power of things that are held together. If therefore, not only in us, and other animals and plants, but in this universe also[2] much prior to bodies, there is one nature of the world, which is connective and motive of the subsistence of bodies, as it is also in us, or why do we call all bodies the progeny of nature, it is indeed necessary that nature should be the cause of things that are connected, and that in this what is called Fate should be investigated. And on this account perhaps the dæmoniacal Aristotle also is accustomed to call those augmentations or generations which are effected beside the accustomed time, *deviations from Fate.* And the divine Plato says, "that the world considered by itself, without the intellectual Gods, is convolved as being corporeal by Fate, and innate desire." The oracles of the Gods also accord with these and bear witness to our demonstrations when they say: "Look not upon Nature, for the name of it is fatal." And thus we have discovered what Fate is, and how it is the nature of this world, and a certain incorporeal essence. For it presides over and is the life of bodies, and this essentially, since it internally moves bodies, and not externally, moves all things according to time, and connects the motions of all things that are distant both in times and places; according to which also, mortal are adapted to the participation of eternal natures, are convolved together with them, and these are mutually copassive. For the nature which is in us, binds and connects all the parts of our body, and their operations on each other: and this also is a certain Fate of our body. As in our body likewise, some parts are more, but others are less principal, and the latter follow the former, so in the universe, the generations of the less principal follow the motions of the more principal parts, viz. the sublunary generations follow the periods of the celestial orbs, and

[1] In Morbeka opportunitatem.

[2] "Sed et in hoc omni." So Morbeka.

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the circle of the former is an image of the circle of the latter. And these things which have been divulged by all the ancients, I am unwilling to prolong.

8. It is not therefore, difficult for you to see what Providence is. For if you assert that the fountain of good is primarily the divine cause itself, you will speak rightly. For whence, except from divinity, is good imparted to all things? So that as Plato says, "no other cause of good than God, is to be admitted." In the next place, Providence being established above both intelligibles and sensibles, is superior to Fate. And those things which are under Fate, are also under Providence, possessing indeed, their connexion from Fate, but their participation of good from Providence, so that the connexion may have a good end, and that Providence may contain the end of Fate in itself. But again, with respect to things that are under Providence, all of them are not likewise indigent of Fate, but intellectual natures are exempt from it. For the empire of Fate is entirely in corporeal natures;[1] since to be connected introduces time, and corporeal motion. To these things also, as it appears to me, Plato looking, says that a subsistence of this kind, is mingled from intellect and necessity, intellect ruling[2] over the necessity of bodies. And in this place, he calls the motive cause necessity, which he elsewhere denominates Fate, conceiving that bodies act by compulsion. And this rightly. For every body is compelled both to do whatever it does, and to suffer whatever it suffers, to heat, or to be heated, to impart or to receive cold. But choice is not in bodies, because you may say that their peculiarity is the necessary and an existence unaccompanied with choice. For if this were not the case, what could there be that is better than bodies? For the body which is moved in a circle, and which is of an illustrious nature, is thus moved from necessity, in the same manner as fire is from necessity moved to the circumference, but earth to the

[1] "Ubi autem in corporeis penitus." So Morbeka.

[2] "Intellectu participante necessitati corporum." *Participante* here is perhaps an error of the transcriber; for Morbeka I have no doubt wrote *principante*.

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middle [of the universe]. Plato therefore asserts that necessity presides over the generations of bodies, and on this account, over their corruptions also; but he exalts intellect, and determines that it rules over necessity. If therefore Providence is above intellect, it is evident that it rules over intellect, and those things which are under this necessity; and that necessity alone rules over those things which are under its dominion. Hence, every thing indeed which has an intellectual subsistence, continues to exist under Providence alone, but every thing which has a corporeal subsistence, endures under necessity.

9. You must understand therefore, that there are two genera of things, the one intellectual, but the other sensible, and also that there are two kingdoms of these, the kingdom of Providence indeed above, which reigns over both intellectuals and sensibles, and the kingdom of Fate beneath, which has dominion over sensibles alone. And Providence differs from Fate, in the same way in which a God differs from that which is divine indeed, but by participation and not primarily. For in other things also, as you may see, one thing has a primary subsistence, and another is according to participation. Thus for instance, there is light in the sun,[1] and light in the air, but the former subsists primarily, and the latter subsists on account of the former. And life is primarily in the soul, but secondarily in the body, and subsists on account of the life of the soul. Thus also, Providence indeed, is essentially deity, but Fate is something divine, and not deity, for it depends on Providence, and is as it were its image. For if as Providence is to intellectual, so is Fate to sensible beings; since the former reigns over intellectuals, but the latter over sensibles; then alternately, as geometricians say, as Providence is to Fate, so are intellectuals to sensibles. But intellectuals are primarily beings, and sensibles derive their subsistence from them. Hence Providence is primarily that which it is, and from this the order of Fate is suspended. But of these things enough.

[1] "Velut lumen Sol," should be *velut lumen sole*.

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10. If you are willing, however, we will betake ourselves to the second discussion, viz. the consideration of the soul which is separable, and of that which is inseparable from bodies. But assume this also from the philosophy of Aristotle. For he says, that every soul which has an energy not at all indigent of body, is likewise allotted an essence beyond and separable from body. And this necessarily. For if we should arrange energy as existing independent of body, but essence inseparable from body, energy would be better than essence, since it would not be at all indigent of a subordinate essence, that being rooted in it, it might have a subsistence according to nature. This however is impossible. It is necessary, therefore, that the soul which has an energy separable from body, should also be itself separable. Consider then, my friend, what soul it is in us, which we acknowledge is not at all indigent of body, in the energies of itself according to nature? Is it sense? But every sensitive power uses corporeal instruments, and together with them energizes about its proper sensibles; viz. it uses the eyes, the ears, and all the other senses, being at the same time moved and co-passive with them. What then shall we say of anger and desire? But do you not see that these frequently co-operate with the corporeal parts, with the heart and the liver, and that these also are not pure from body? For how is it possible that things which energize with sense, should not also be indigent of body, since sense is always moved through body? But with respect to the orectic powers, that these energize with sense, is I conceive known to all of us. For what deprived of sense, can either be angry, or desire? Plotinus also rightly asserting, that all the passions are either senses, or are not without sense. If, therefore, that which is angry is so in conjunction with sense, possessing at the same time a sense of sorrow, and that which desires possesses a sense of delight; but that which energizes with sense energizes with body, for sense subsists with body;—if this be the case, it is necessary that every thing which is angry and desires, should energize with body. Hence, these species of life, being all of them irrational, have that energy which is according to nature in conjunction with body.

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11. Looking now, however, to the rational nature itself, consider the life of it which is seated in the inferior lives, and corrects either what is deficient in them according to knowledge, as when from above it evinces that sense is deceived about its own objects of knowledge. I mean for instance, when it shows that sense is deceived in asserting that the sun is but a foot in diameter, or when sense with its usual deception asserts of such things any thing of a similar nature: or when reason disciplines anger,[1] which is immoderate in its motions, when it is agitated with fury. Hence Ulysses in Homer exclaims "endure, my heart," and represses the impulse of anger barking like a dog: or when the rational nature represses the wantonness of desire, and frustrates its endeavours to detain the soul by the delights that germinate from the body, the petulance of these delights being ameliorated by the corporeal temperaments. For in all such energies the rational soul evidently represses all the irrational motions both gnostic and orectic, and liberates itself from them, as from things foreign to its nature. It is necessary, however, to investigate the nature of every thing, not from the perverted use of it, but from its natural energies. Hence, if reason, when it is moved in us as reason, restrains the shadowy impression of the delights of desire, punishes the precipitate motion of anger, and reproves sense as full of deception, asserting that we neither hear nor see any thing accurately,[2] and if it asserts these things looking to its internal reasons, none of which it knows through body, or through corporeal cognitions, it is evident that according to this energy it elongates itself from the senses, contrary to the decision of which it is separated from those sorrows and delights.

12. After this, however, I see another and a better energy of our rational soul, the inferior powers being now at rest, and exhibiting no tumult, as in many things they are accustomed to do, according to which energy she is converted to herself, sees her own essence and the powers[3]

[1] Iram is omitted here in the version of Morbeka.

[2] "Dicens quod neque audimus, circum nihil, neque videmus." So Morbeka.

[3] Virtutes in Morbeka, i. e. δυναμεις in the original.

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she contains, the harmonic ratios of which she consists, and the many lives of which she is the completion, and re-discovers herself to be a rational world, the image indeed of the natures prior to herself, and from which she has departed, but the paradigm of the natures posterior to herself, and over which she presides. To this energy of the soul, my friend, arithmetic, and geometry, the mother of your art, are said to contribute much,[1] which indeed elongate the soul from the senses, purify the intellect from the irrational forms of life with which it is surrounded, and lead it to the incorporeal comprehension of forms, extending as it were, the lustrations to the future mystics that are anterior to the most sacred mysteries. For consider from intellectual energies after what manner the above-mentioned sciences are allotted the purifying power of which we have been speaking. For if they assume the soul replete with images, and knowing nothing subtile, and unattended with material garrulity, and if they cause reasons to shine forth which possess an irrefragable necessity of demonstration, and forms full of all certainty and immateriality, and by no means calling to their assistance the grossness which is in sensibles, do they not evidently purify our intellectual life from those things that fill us with folly, and which are unadapted to the divine circumscription of beings ?

13. After both these energies of the rational soul, let us survey her now running back to her highest intelligence, through which she sees her sister souls in the world, which are allotted the heavens and the whole of generation according to the will of the father, and of which she being a part, desires the contemplation of them. But she sees above all souls, intellectual essences and orders. For above every soul a deiform intellect resides, which imparts to the soul an intellectual habit. She also sees prior to these, the monads of the Gods themselves which are above intellect, and from which the intellectual multitudes receive their unions. For it is necessary that unific causes should be placed above things united, in the same manner as vivifying causes are above things vivified,

[1] "Multam habere partem." So Morbeka.

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causes that impart intellect are above things intellectualized, and in a similar manner imparticipable hypostases are above all participants. For according to all these elevating intellections, I conceive it is evident to those that are not perfectly blind, how the rational soul leaving sense and bodies behind, is led upward by intellectual surveys about the inflected and truly mystic intuitions of the supermundane Gods. Or whence, and from what kind of energies have the progeny of the Gods unfolded to us the occult dispensations of divinity? And after what manner are souls said to energize enthusiastically, and assuming a mania better than temperance[1] to be conjoined to the Gods themselves? I speak of the Sibyl who soon after she was born uttered admirable things, and told those who were present at the time who she was, and from what order she came into this terrestrial abode, and I allude to any other soul who in a similar manner was of a divine destiny.[2]

14. In short, we must say that the rational and intellectual soul in whatever way it may energize, is beyond body and sense; and therefore it is necessary that it should have an essence separable from both these. This however though of itself now evident, I will again manifest from hence, that when it energizes according to nature, it is superior to the influence of Fate, but that when it falls into sense, and becomes irrational and corporeal, it follows the natures that are beneath it, and living with them as with intoxicated neighbours, is held in subjection by a cause that has dominion over things that are different from the rational essence.[3] For again, it is necessary that there should be a certain genus of beings of this kind, which according to essence indeed is above Fate, but according to habitude is sometimes arranged under it. For if indeed the beings which are wholly eternal are placed above the laws of Fate, but there are beings which according to the whole of their life, are arranged under the periods of Fate, it will also be necessary that there should be an intermediate nature between these two, which sometimes

[1] In Morbeka, sobrietate meliorem. [2] Divinæ partis. So Morbeka.

[3] In Morbeka, "obtinetur et ab aliorum regnante causa."

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indeed is above the productions of Fate, and sometimes is under its dominion. For the progression of beings much more than the situation of bodies, leaves no vacuum; but there are every where media between the extremes, which also bind the extremes to each other. And not only Plato, but likewise the oracles of the Gods have revealed these things to us. For in the first place indeed, they order those divine men who were thought worthy to be the auditors of those mystic discourses, "*not to look upon nature, because the name of it is fatal.*" And again, they order them "*not to co-augment Fate.*" Every where also, they exhort them to turn from the life which is according to Fate, and to avoid "*becoming corporeal with the fatal herds;*" by all which they withdraw us from the senses and material desires; for through these we become corporeal, and are then acted upon from necessity by Fate. For similitude every where copulates[1] beings to each other; but that which is assimilated enjoys the same polity as that to which it is assimilated, whatever it may be, and consequently is under the dominion of the ruler of that polity. For nothing is without a ruler and a principality in the universe, whether you speak of wholes, or of parts. But different things have different rulers, because these live in one way, and those in another. Afterwards, the oracles teaching concerning our most divine life, and that immaculate polity, which we enjoy when liberated from every polity of Fate, say, "*The souls that become venerable by understanding the works of the father will escape the fatal wing*[2] *of Destiny.*"

15. The soul, therefore, embracing this life, and such a life as this, will not rank among those souls that are led by Fate. But if it wishes to

[1] In Morbeka *captat* instead of *copulat.*

[2] "Quicunque autem pacis opera intelligentes reverendi fient, sortis fatalem alam effugiunt." So Morbeka; in which, for *pacis* read *patris*, and for *alam*, *aleam*. This oracle in the original is as follows:

Νοησασαι τα εργα του πατρος
Μοιρης ειμαρμενης το πτερον φευγουσιν αναιδες.

See my Collection of Chaldæan Oracles in the Monthly Magazine.

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conform itself to body, aspires after what are called corporeal goods, and pursues honours, power and riches, it suffers the same thing as a philosopher who is chained, and in this condition enters a ship. For he becomes subservient to the winds that move the ship, [and cannot help himself] if some one of the sailors should trample on him, or some fettered slave should insult him. Bidding farewell, therefore, to the things to which we are bound, we should direct our attention to the strength of virtue, and consider Fate not as effecting any thing in us, but in the things which surround us. For with respect, my friend, to all external circumstances that may befal us, enemies may demolish the walls of our city, and reduce its buildings to ashes, they may deprive us of our possessions, and leave us in a state of indigence; but all these being mortal and external, are in consequence of this in the power of other beings, and not in ours. But with respect to the things which are in our power, there is no one so potent as to be able to take away any one of them, even though he should possess all human power. For if we are temperate, we shall still continue to be so, though these calamities may befal us, and if we are contemplators of true beings, neither shall we be plundered of this habit; but all these dreadful events taking place, we shall still persevere in celebrating the rulers of all things, and in investigating the causes of effects.

16. By no means, therefore, must we reprobate the necessity of the soul from its ultimate energies, but looking to its first energies, we should admire its unconquerable power. And if we are thus wise, nothing will disturb us pertaining to the passions of the inferior parts of the soul; but when the body is disturbed, and we say that we sustain something of a dreadful nature, it is not we who thus speak, but it is the language of desire; [1] for the delights of the body, and therefore its sorrows pertain to this part. When also being robbed of our wealth, or not obtaining riches, we are grieved, this passion belongs to that power of the soul which is a lover of wealth. And again, when being reproached, and

[1] In Morbeka, *concupiscentiæ;* but in the Greek it was doubtless επιθυμιας. This word as used by Plato and Aristotle, signifies an appetite of the soul directed to the possession and enjoyment of eternal good.

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falling from power, we are indignant, this is not the passion of the superior soul, but of that which dwells downward, about the heart. For this pertains to the part which is a lover of honour. But the reason which is in us, being in all such particulars deceived, follows and is at the same time disturbed with the subordinate powers of the soul, being a blind intellect, and not having that eye [1] yet purified, by which it is able to perceive itself, and the natures prior and posterior to itself. When, however, it becomes purified from those things with which it was invested when it fell, it will then know what that is which is in its power, how it is neither in corporeal natures; for these are posterior to reason; nor in those beings in whom there is the liberty of divine will; for they are prior to reason; but that it consists in living according to virtue. For this alone is free and unservile, and adapted to liberty, and is truly the power of the soul, and confers power on its possessor. For it is the province of all power to contain and preserve that which possesses it.

17. But he who directs his attention to vice, looks at the debility of the soul, though she should possess all other power. For the power of instruments is one thing, and the power of those beings that ought to use the instruments another. Hence, every soul, so far as it participates of virtue, and so far as it is [a rational soul], is free; but so far as it is vicious and debilitated, and is not [rational], it is subservient to other things,[2] and not to Fate only, but to every thing, in short, that is either willing to give that which is appetible, or is able to take it away. For he who possesses virtue is subservient to those beings who are alone sufficient to impart to and coaugment with him that which is desirable; but these are the Gods, with whom there is true virtue, and from whom that which is in our power is derived. Plato also somewhere says, that this voluntary servi-

[1] "Et nondum purgatus illud," in Morbeka, i. e. illum oculum.

[2] Morbeka's version of this part is as follows: "Omnis igitur anima secundum quod virtute participat, et quod est liberam esse: secundum quod autem malitia et debilitate et eo quod est servire aliis," &c. But it should be, conformably to the above version; Omnis igitur anima secundum quod virtute participat, et quod est, liberam esse; secundum quod autem malitia et debilitate, et eo quod non est, servire aliis.

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tude is the greatest liberty. For by being subservient to those who possess all the power of all things, we become assimilated to them, so that, as he says, we govern the whole world; i. e. when we are perfect and winged, and reign on high. This, therefore, pertains to the most divine of our souls, just as it pertains to the last of them, to be as it were bound in prison, and to live an involuntary, instead of a voluntary free life. But to the souls that have an intermediate subsistence between these, it belongs, so far as they are liberated from passions and the body, to ascend above necessity to a life which has dominion over generation.

18. For again, if intellect and deity are prior to soul, but passions and bodies are posterior to it; and if to these it belongs to act from compulsion, but to intellect and deity, to act in a manner better than all necessity, and which is alone free, it is necessary that the soul betaking itself either to the former or to the latter, should either enter under the necessity of subordinate, or exert the liberty of more excellent natures; and that it should be subservient either to a supernal dominion, or to a dominion inferior to itself.[1] But if it is subservient, it must either rule in conjunction with the powers that rule over it, or be alone subservient in conjunction with subservient natures. Here, therefore, the soul ascending and resuming its power, which is virtue, will consider nothing as dreadful whatever it may be, that takes place about and external to the body. For the passions of instruments do not pass to those that use them; but in whatever manner they may subsist, it is possible for the soul to energize according to virtue; strenuously indeed, if the body should happen to be languid, but moderately when it is sane. And when poverty is present, it may energize sublimely, but in affluence magnificently; but every where from occurring circumstances, it may extol virtue that uses them; and being ameliorated by its inward strength may vanquish external calamities. For you must not suppose that you mechanists alone, are to be permitted to say, that you can move a given

[1] This is barbarously expressed in the version of Morbeka, as follows, "et servire quidem aut desuper principatum, aut desuptus."

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weight with a given power; for this you are well known to assert; but it is much more possible for those who live according to virtue, truly to adorn a power given from every circumstance by another power. And he who does this is generous and free; but the bad man is the slave of all things though he should rule over all things. For he resembles those who are punished in Egypt, by laughing vizards that surround them. Over these also, who are not able to govern themselves, necessity prevails. For being elongated from the Gods, the universe uses them as brutes.

19. When, therefore, you wish to see that which is in our power, look at the soul living according to nature. But the soul which is not debile lives according to nature. For there is nothing debile in that which is conformable to nature. The soul, however, is not debile, which is not replete with vice, [the evil of the soul]; for in all things evil is debile. And if you consider the soul in this point of view, you will see what the nature is of that which is in our power. For you will see that it uses all circumstances rightly, and either prohibits them from taking place, or providentially attends to calamitous events when they occur. It also permits Fate to act upon those things which are posterior to Fate, and of which it is the lord; but is co-ordinated to the natures prior to itself, and from which being more excellent than itself, it is not divulsed. And thus much for the second particular which we proposed to discuss.

20. In the third place, we will show what, and of what kind the modes of knowledge are; for if we suffer these to remain indistinct, we shall ignorantly err both about things themselves, and the doctrines of the divine Plato. Let us then direct our attention to that mode of knowledge divulged by Aristotle, and also Plato, which without the assignation of cause alone knows the truth of the ὅτι; or *that a thing is;* [a] because to souls beginning to be purified, these philosophers attribute opinion as the first mode of knowledge, and as adapted to those who are instructed

[a] In the version of Morbeka, "quæ sine causa solam cognoscentem ipsius quia veritatem."

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in practical affairs,[1] without engaging in the contemplation of beings. For erudition is a purgation of the immoderation of the passions, reason in this case being copassive indeed, but moderately, and casting off all the rope of the passions.

21. Such then being this mode of knowledge, another mode of an elevating nature is delivered to us from the same Gymnasium. But this knowledge is said to proceed from principles indeed as hypotheses, to know causes, and to form necessary conclusions in all its reasonings. And such is the knowledge obtained through arithmetic and geometry, which syllogize, conclude from things necessary, and are alone placed above doxastic knowledge. Because, however these sciences abiding in their principles, do not ascend to the causes of these, on this account they show themselves to fall short of the most perfect knowledge. For as Aristotle says, " it is not the business of a geometrician to discourse with him who subverts the principles of his science." Hence, in these sciences, that which is deduced from principles acknowledged by them will be manifest; but that which pertains to the principles themselves is obscure and unknown.

22. In the third place, ascending higher, conceive me to speak of that knowledge of the human soul which ascends as far as to *the one*, and to that which is unhypothetical, through all forms or ideas, as I may say, dividing some, but analyzing others, and producing many things from one, and one thing from many. Socrates, in the Republic, defines this knowledge to be the defensive inclosure of the mathematical sciences, and the guest in the Epinomis asserts it to be the bond of them. For from this, geometry, and each of the other sciences, assume the theory concerning their principles, adapting[2] to themselves many principles, and which are divided or separated from the one principle of all things. For what *the one* is in all beings, that a point is in geometry, the monad in arithmetic,

[1] In Morbeka, " agibilia;" but in the Greek, I have no doubt, τα πρακτα.

[2] In Morbeka rejungentem, but I read adaptantem.

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and in every thing, that which is most simple; from which principles the several sciences producing those things which are under them, frame their demonstrations. Each of these, however, is said to be, and is, a certain principle. For the principle of all beings is simply principle, and the highest ascent of the sciences, is as far as to this.

23. There still remains for you to understand a fourth mode of our knowledge, which is more simple than the preceding, because it does not employ methods, or analyses, or compositions, or definitions, or demonstrations; but those who are able to energize according to it, celebrate it as contemplating beings by simple, and as it were self-visive projections; and they add, that they venerate it as intellect, and not as science. Or have you not heard that Aristotle in his demonstrative treatises says, that the intellect which is in us is our most excellent part, and is that by which we know terms or boundaries'; and that Plato in the Timæus asserts that intellect and science are the knowledges of the soul about beings? For science indeed appears to pertain to the soul, so far as the soul is knowledge; but intellect pertains to it so far as the soul is the image of true and real intellect. For intellect perceiving intellectuals, or rather being one with them, Plato says, that it understands them by projecting energies, by intuition and contact, understanding itself, and beholding intelligibles in itself, on which account it intellectually sees what it is, and knows that it is at one and the same time both the perceiver and the thing perceived. The soul, therefore, imitating this as much as she is able, becomes herself intellect, running above science, leaving the many methods with which she was before adorned, elevating her eye to beings alone, and understanding them by contact in the same manner as intellect; from which she differs in this, that she comes into contact with different intelligibles at different times, but intellect passes into contact with all things at once.

24. After all these modes of knowledge, I wish you (who have believed in Aristotle when he leads the soul upward as far as to intellectual energy, but insinuates nothing beyond this), to assume a fifth intelligence;

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in so doing, following Plato, and prior to Plato theologists, who are accustomed to celebrate a knowledge which is above intellect, and have divulged this as a truly divine mania. But they say that this is obtained by exciting the profundity of the soul, which is no longer intellectual, and adapting it to union with *the one*. For all things are known by the similar, that which is sensible by sense, that which is the object of science by science, that which is intelligible by intellect, and that which is one by that which is charactertized by unity. For the soul indeed being intellective knows herself, and knows whatever she understands, by contact, as we have before observed. But being superintelligent, she is ignorant both of herself and of the objects of knowledge, and being near to *the one*, she loves quiet, having shut up her knowledge, becoming mute, and being silent with internal silence. For how can she be adjacent to the most ineffable of all things, except by laying asleep the garrulous matter that is in her? Hence, she must become one that she may see *the one*, or rather that she may not see *the one*. For seeing, she will see that which is intellectual, and not that which is above intellect, and will intellectually perceive a certain one, and not *the one itself*. He, my friend, who energizes according to this most divine energy of the soul, trusting solely to himself, viz. to the flower of his intellect, causing himself to be at rest not from external, but from internal motions, and becoming a God as far as it is possible for the soul to be so, will understand how the Gods alone ineffably know all things, according to *the one* of themselves. But as long as we are rolled about things beneath, it will appear to us to be incredible that divinity knows all things impartibly and supereternally; eternal beings indeed, having a real existence, but things which are in generation, or becoming to be, subsisting temporally, neither time nor eternity subsisting in *the one*. So many indeed are the species of knowledge with us, by looking to which it is possible to solve all the doubts concerning the truth which the soul may know,[1] and concerning that which it is not possible for her to know, in the present life.

[1] In Morbeka "*solvere*," instead of *scire*.

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25. Because, however, we have made three discussions which we said were necessary to a distinct survey of the objects of inquiry, let us now pass to the doubts, and give to each of them an appropriate solution. In the first place, therefore, you consider this as a sufficient argument that what is in our power is frivolous, and is the work alone of the celestial bodies, viz. that we men assert ourselves to be the causes of those events which are attended with prosperity; but in things in which we are unfortunate, we transfer the cause to necessity, instead of ascribing them to choice. And thus doubting, you think you obtain this as a common conception concerning Fate, that it has a more principal power in practical affairs than our impulses. Indeed, I myself do not see men otherwise affected than as ascribing to themselves the cause of their success, but to others the cause of their errors. But in this we differ, that you indeed admit the opinion of the many as sufficient to form a judgment of things; while I conceive them to reason in this way through a certain immoderate love of themselves. Among wise men, however, to whom it belongs to look both to whole and parts, and not to neglect the order which they possess with reference to them, divinity is considered as the principal cause of all events from which good is derived to all things; but the next causes to this are, the period of the world, and time, in which events are co-adapted and co-ordinated to wholes, nothing being superfluously adventitious in the polity of wholes; and in the third place, they consider themselves as causes in those things in which they are allotted a deliberate choice, and in which by their impulses they co-operate to the completion of things.

26. When, however, any thing happens contrary to their choice, then they deservedly ascribe the event to wholes alone, and the efficiency of wholes, as the conquering cause. For it is every where necessary that partial natures should energize in conjunction with wholes, but wholes without partial natures. And after this manner intellectual men divide events, but not as you have divided them. Hear, likewise, Plato in the Laws exclaiming that divinity indeed governs all things; but that after divinity, Fortune and Time rule over all human affairs; and that our art

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follows as the third after these. For during a tempest, the pilot's art contributes something, and in disease the medical art, and in short, in practical affairs, the political art.[1] If, therefore, our affairs are prosperous, Fate, Time, and Divinity, must be considered as the causes that they are so. Hence, there will be three causes of events, Divinity indeed causing that which comes to pass to be good; but Time and Fate causing it to be arranged in one concord with every thing. And in short, another cause is human. For every human work is a part of the universe, but the contrary is not true, because it is necessary that other animals also, since they are parts of the universe, should not only[2] act, but also suffer. For every part, indeed, of this mundane fabric and drama has for its end good; since no part of it is left inordinate, but is so woven with other parts, as to contribute to the well-being of the universe. The contrary, however, is not true, that every thing which is allotted good is co-ordinated with the mundane polity. For there is a supermundane life, and the life of the Gods, and of souls that transcend Fate, and follow Providence alone.

27. Where then does that which is in our power exist? Since that which is generated, is connected with the period of the world, and again, since it is produced from that alone. Where else should we say it exists, than in our internal elections and impulses? For of these alone we are the lords; but things which take place external to us, have many other more powerful beings as their lords. For it is necessary that what is generated externally should become a part of the universe, that it may also be generated; and that this should be effected through the consent and co-operation of the universe, that it may produce every thing in itself, by one part of itself acting on another, and being passive from another. On this account, therefore, in the actions of men, we praise these persons,

[1] "Et totaliter agibilium politicam." So Morbeka. This in the original was, I suppose, και ολως τοις πρακτοις την πολιτικην.

[2] Instead of "quia et aliis animalibus necesse partibus entibus omnes et facere, sed et pati," as in Morbeka, it is necessary to read, in order to make sense of the passage, quia et aliis animalibus necesse partibus entibus, non modo et facere, sed et pati.

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but we blame those, because through choice they were lords of their deeds, and we do not say that the universe, but the agent was the cause of the quality of the actions. For the quality of a deed is not derived from the universe, but from the life of the agent. It is, however, co-ordinated to the whole on account of the whole, and is again such as it is on account of a part. And that we assert these things with truth, the oracles of the Gods will manifest to you, since they often ascribe victory to our choice, and not to the order alone of the mundane periods; as for instance, when they say: "On beholding yourself, fear." And again; "Know thyself." And, "Believe yourself to be above body, and you are." In short, they say, "that our sorrows germinate in us as the voluntary progeny of the particular life which we lead."

28. It is not fit, therefore, to refer all events to the order alone of the universe, as neither is it fit to refer them to our impulse alone. Nor again is it proper to separate the soul from those beings that have an absolute elective power,[1] and whose very being consists in deliberate choice alone, and in declining this thing, but embracing that; though the soul in those events which take place is not the mistress of the universe. For it is requisite that every cause should aspire after that thing alone which it is naturally adapted to obtain. But that which is in our power, is not only adapted to be active, but also to be essentially elective. It is also adapted to act electively in conjunction with other things, and either to err or act rightly on account of choice. For though the deed may be good, yet if the agent acts from a bad choice, we say that the action is bad. For that which is good in the deed, is on account of something else, but that which is depraved is on account of the choice of him who performs the deed. Hence, it is evident to all men that we are the lords of actions, so far as they are eligible.

29. But after this question, you say that all of us are solicitous about futurity in all things, and even in those things which appear to be in our

[1] This in Morbeka is, "neque suream sequestrare animam a dominis electionum."

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power. Speaking summarily, you say well. What then, if we are all lovers of divination, is there nothing in our power? I, however, on the contrary say, that if nothing is in our power, but events are compelled to take place from motion alone, we shall not be lovers of divination. For what occasion is there for divination in things which owe their existence to external compulsion, and the knowledge of which is as of things future or not future. For such knowledge is superfluous, when events are necessary; since it is impossible for that which is necessary not to come to pass, though we should a thousand times consult about, and be prescient of it. If, therefore, events necessarily happen, we are in vain solicitous about futurity. We are not, however, in vain solicitous about it, since this is natural to us; for nothing which is according to nature is in vain. Hence, it is not proper to consider all things as produced by compulsion, in consequence of binding them by the circulation of the heavenly bodies; but we must admit that foreknowledge is in some things profitable to us, and that we do not live merely for the purpose of foreknowing events, but that by foreknowing we may contribute or not contribute something to things future, and may be more prompt in our energies. We must likewise admit that not divination only, but prayers, and the whole business of sacred rites contribute something to our advantage, or we must exile these, pouring oil on their heads, and crowning them with wool, and we must neither extend our hands upward, nor grant that we ought to worship those who are able to suspend the celestial influences. For men when in difficult circumstances will in vain indulge a hope of being liberated from them by invoking divinity, and Apollo himself will in vain give responses, unless [1] by performing certain things it is possible to escape the punishment which is suspended from the celestial periods, and by not performing them, the dreaded event will necessarily take place.

30. Indeed, if this were not the case, would it not be perfectly absurd to make this division, and to allow conformably to the oracles of the

[1] Morbeka has *quia* here instead of *nisi*.

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Gods that something must be granted to our choice? But neither must we proclaim this of divinity [viz. that his oracles are given in vain], nor must we exterminate from human life, the utility of divination, and of the sacerdotal office; because you have all history both Barbarian and Grecian conjointly testifying that through divination, whether from divine inspiration, or from human art, many have frequently known what it was requisite to do, and through this knowledge have been liberated from evils, which would have been otherwise inevitable. This then I determine as appropriate to the present discussion, that sometimes [1] this much celebrated divination, and the performance of sacred rites contribute to a certain thing being effected or not, and sometimes [2] predominate over those generations which are introduced from the universe. When, therefore, since all things are in all, divine and dæmoniacal causes concur in one, and as it were assert the same thing, then the works of sacrifice are seen to be inefficacious; for it is impossible for a part to oppose and effect things contrary to the whole; and foreknowledge, in this case, neither adds nor takes away any thing from the events which are the subjects of divination. But when, in consequence of there being many things of this kind, these effect one thing, and those another; as for instance, these effect the destruction, but those the safety of the diseased, through the operations of the celestial bodies upon us, as is evident from all history, then the performance of some sacred right, by employing co-operative powers, liberates us from the noxious defluxions, by those that are beneficial. And the consideration of the future contributes much to effects. In short, that which is in our power being co-ordinated with these, or with other causes, as in calamities, in consequence of receiving a greater increase through its own motion, exhibits sometimes one, and sometimes another end. And know that this takes place in things which are externally produced. Every where, however, the quality of the impulse has a prior existence, and choice characterizes that which is in our power. This also is the work of the soul, which abides in it and is not to be referred

[1] *Quando* in Morbeka, instead of *aliquando*.

[2] Here too Morbeka has *quando* instead of *aliquando*.

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to the universe.' Conformably, therefore, to these things, as it appears to me, you say that the universe governs all animals, and that we and other animals have a diminished life imparted from the air, and the first circulation. And that the rational part indeed is in the brain; but that what is called sense is in the organs of sense, and is conversant with different sensibles, but that the sight, the hearing, and the other senses, differ only in their subjects, but are essentially one and without diversity.[2]

31. Hearing you make this arrangement, I was surprized that a lover of philosophy and intellectual speculations, and why do I say of intellectual speculations, but who is also skilled in the paths of erudition and in the inventions of geometry and arithmetic, should attribute as much to the senses as to our rational and intellectual essence, though they scarcely come into contact with the objects of knowledge through debile organs, and should conceive that they only differ from each other, and from the rational part by a certain diversity of organs. For we have indeed elsewhere and prior to this shown that all the senses are inseparable from body, and incapable of being converted to themselves, but that the rational and intellectual life is naturally adapted to know itself, and in consequence of this knowledge to be converted to itself. For every thing gnostic is according to energy converted to the object of knowledge; and therefore that which is gnostic of itself is converted to itself. What identity, therefore, do you see between the intellectual and the sensitive soul, between that which looks downward, and that which tends upward? And in short, what identity do you perceive between the soul which is buried in bodies, and the soul which is unmingled with bodies? Between that which can never know truth, and that which always extends itself to real being?

32. But if the appetite which is according to nature is not in vain in any thing else, neither is it in that which is sometimes allotted the

[1] "Inecferribile in universum." Morbeka.

[2] Morbeka has *differentem* here, instead of *indifferentem*.

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perception of truth. I omit to say that it is absurd to assert that the essence of a divine soul flows downward from ether, if it is proper to call that which is impossible absurd. For the souls which are derived from ether are allotted a corporeal generation; but the Athenian guest demonstrates that the rational soul is more ancient than all bodies. But if by ether you do not mean a body, but an etherial intellect, or an intellectual soul surrounding ether, neither thus do you appear to me to have discovered the most true cause of the soul. For there is another fountain of souls from which etherial souls, the souls of the sublunary elements, dæmoniacal souls, and ours are derived. And it is necessary to look to that cause which Plato concealing the truth, as it appears to me, calls the Crater; in which he represents the demiurgus mingling the soul of the universe, as Timæus says, not from ether, but prior to bodies. The Chaldean oracles also celebrate the essential fountain of every soul, viz. of the empyreal, etherial, and material, and separate this from the whole vivific goddess; from which also suspending the whole of Fate, they make two series, the one psychical, and the other fatal. Deriving the soul, therefore, from one of these series, they assert that it sometimes becomes subservient to Fate, when becoming irrational it changes its lord, viz. Fate for Providence.

33. That, as I have said however, you have not asserted any thing worthy the intellectual energy of Geometry and Arithmetic, in co-ordinating our soul with the senses, you may learn, by considering that the first employment of these sciences is to separate the soul from that energy which subsists in conjunction with the senses, to withdraw it from them as much as possible, to accustom it to look within, to see immaterial reasons, and to investigate demonstrations, the conclusions of which are contrary to the informations of the senses. For they indeed reject impartibility, but these sciences require it, and derive their existence from impartibles; since partibles are the principles of the former, but impartibles of the latter. And the knowledge of the senses indeed is confined to particulars; but universals, and those things the nature of which is always the same, are the objects of the knowledge of the above-mentioned

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sciences; which they do not derive from the senses, for imperfect are not the causes of perfect things; but supernally from intellect, on which account also they sit in judgment on the senses, reprehend the grossness of their knowledge, the passivity of their perceptions, and their indefinite motions.

34. For indeed the knowledge of the senses is truly ludicrous; but the intention of the mathematical sciences is to liberate us from things ludicrous, and accustom us instead of pursuing these, to investigate the knowledge of real being. It belongs to the sensible life therefore, to be under the dominion of Fate, and to be acted upon differently at different times, in conjunction with bodies, in which the necessity from Fate consists. For every form inseparable from matter, is ingenerated in, and contained by it; since it does not pertain to it, through being converted to itself to say, that what externally accedes to it is one thing, and that which is true another. But it alone says that it announces passion, on which account it belongs to alter-motive natures, in consequence of not having an energy perfectly liberated from them. The intellectual life however, is according to its own nature converted to itself,[1] and cannot endure to follow the violent passions of sense, but contains in itself criteria of the fallacious motions externally introduced, and adds indeed what is deficient to the passive perceptions of sense, and confutes the fallacy of its information; accomplishing at the same time all this by its own proper energy. For it is not the province of things which pertain to sense to form a judgment of sense, but this belongs to intellectual reasons, which the knowledge of sense is incapable of receiving. The immaterial therefore and separable life, and which energizes in itself, must be admitted to be contrary to that of sense; and to this must be given a choice of inclination, upward and downward, to intellect by which it was produced, and to sense which it generates; but we must admit that sense and all corporeal lives are without choice, because this is also the case with bodies. For the rational soul being a medium between intellect and sense,

[1] The words *ad seipsam convertitur*, are omitted by Morbeka.

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tends to both on account of the unstable inclination of choice; but it becomes according to habitude each of the extremes, of which it is essentially neither. But the perfection which it derives from intellect, and the deception which it receives from sense, manifest its middle nature. And such, as it appears to me, is the correction [1] of the dogma.

35. With respect to your opinion concerning good which you have introduced into the midst of your enquiries, viz. that what is delectable to the several individuals of mankind is good, and that this exists by position, since different things are considered as legal by different nations; I should be ashamed indeed, if in writing to a friend I did not manifestly assert that I conceive this opinion to be unworthy both of my choice and my years. For it does not appear to me to be at all wonderful that a young man in consequence of looking to the opinions of men in many things, should form such an opinion. But I think he who admits that an aged intellect ought to preside as a judge, will adopt the decisions of intellectual conceptions, and not those which the rumour and unbalanced motions of the multitude have spread abroad. Now therefore, because to the Persians, some things appear to be delectable, and also certain things which are congruous to these delectables are considered by them as legal; but to the Greeks other things appear to be delectable and legal; and to other nations other things; on this account a different thing is imagined to be good and delectable by different people. And whoever is allotted a delight which is naturally good to every one, will possess an end adapted to man; but whoever errs from this end, though he should be a thousand times delighted with things which are present to him and appear to be good, yet he will reap but an imperfect fruit of such delight.

36. But it is, as it seems, true, that one inconvenience being given, others follow, which you also appear to me to suffer. For placing the soul under the dominion of Fate, you have co-ordinated her with the irrational senses, and collecting these into one and the same thing, you

[1] Morbeka has *directionem*, but the original was I have no doubt κατορθωσιν.

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have mingled good with that which is debile. It is necessary however to eject both the former and this from the soul, that we may not ignorantly ascribe the same things to men as to brutes, whose life is without conversion to itself, and is naturally bent to earth, and whose knowledge is mingled with material passions. These things also are unfolded by Plato with, as I may say, adamantine arguments. For says he that which is not good is not [truly] delectable, though all oxen should assert it to be so. For we are not to adduce the testimony of oxen, but of the Gods, with whom there is intellect, and the good of being, which is more divine than intellect itself. These things being clearly asserted in the Gorgias, the Philebus, and the Republic, I think it would be superfluous to dwell on them any farther.

37. This however, I will add to what has been said, that the investigation of good is not to be mingled with the delectable, (for thus the petulance of delight will cause us to be foolish) but the all-various diversities of human customs and legal institutions, are to be referred to the different lives of souls, viz. to the rational, the irascible and the epithymetic forms of life; for the former germinate from the latter; since, as it is said, they are not derived from an oak, nor from a rock. But the many-headed beast persuades these to establish such things by law as the Persians established; the leonine soul persuades others to adopt such things as the Thracians adopted; and in others reason prevails in the adoption of legal and true good. And the delectable indeed, is common to all these. For the appetible when present is delectable to every one, but good is not delectable to all men, but to those in whom reason presides. For the passions do not see good, but this is alone the province of reason. And to reason indeed, the delectable and the good are the same; but the fabrication of things did not give to the blind passions the investigation of good, but of the delectable; for every species of life when it energizes without impediment is delighted. Hence there are many legal institutions, and all-various delectables, and they are different to different persons; but good is alone with those in whom reason predominates over the passions. For dominion must not be given to desire, that we may

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not be affected in the same manner as asses; nor to anger, that we may not resemble lions; but it must be given to that which is the most excellent part of our nature, which we alone are, or according to which we principally subsist. For the being of every thing which consists of many things, some better, and others worse, is according to that which is the best among them. For that which is best sagaciously conjectures the nature of good.

38. As to what you afterwards write in the way of doubt, you seem to me to have written it in consequence of hearing Socrates in many places asserting that he knew nothing, deriding those who say that they know all things, and farther still contending that when we depart from hence we shall especially know the truth, and be in possession of more certain sciences, and also inferring that the mathematical are not truly sciences. You doubt therefore from all this whether it is not perhaps impossible to know the truth, and whether we do not only dream about it. Indeed it is requisite you should at the same time understand, that if it is not possible for us to know the truth, we do not more know if there is any thing in our power than if there is not. For our ignorance of both similarly prevents our adoption of either of these positions. How therefore, can we use the ignorance of truth in order to show whether there is any thing which is in our power? Since with respect to the existence, and non-existence of this, ignorance possesses the same power, or rather impotency.

39. That we may not however, suffer any thing of this kind, we have already enumerated all the modes of knowledge; and have shown what the modes are of which the soul can participate here, and what those are when she assumes a supreme order. And of these indeed, Socrates possessing the former, but hoping that he shall obtain the latter on being liberated from the body, says, "that arriving thither he shall know the truth." For other measures and other objects of knowledge afforded him an opportunity of indulging such a hope. Because it is a thing usual with the friends of Plato to inquire whether it is possible for the soul to

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live not only cathartically, but also theoretically, while surrounded with this gross bond the body. And I think the subject has been sufficiently discussed, and has been brought to this conclusion, that perhaps it is possible to live theoretically even here, like the coryphæan philosopher in the Theætetus, astronomizing above the heavens,[1] and investigating on all sides all the nature of beings, and also like those guardians in the Republic, who ascend as far as to *the good itself*, through that dialectic, which Plato calls the defensive inclosure of the mathematical sciences. Again, however, that it is impossible while here to lead a theoretic life in perfection, is evident from the causes which are enumerated in the Phædo, viz. the occupations and molestations of the body, which do not suffer us to energize theoretically without impediment, and disturbance. For the life is theoretic, but the energy is called contemplation, and the contemplation of *the one*.

40. When also Socrates does not permit us to call the mathematical sciences [truly] sciences, he does not do this as denying that they have a necessity of demonstrations, but as falling short of the supreme of sciences. And why should I not say, at falling short of dialectic, which no longer considers a point, or the monad, as a principle, but *the good*, and considers the principle of all things. Whence also, as I conceive, Socrates in the section of a line[2] [in the 6th book of the Republic] assigns the second part to the mathematical sciences; but to perfectly immaterial and separate forms, he assigns a part, and a knowledge prior to these; the former proceeding from hypothesis, but the latter being unhypothetical. And with Socrates, the author of the Epinomis likewise accords. For he calls dialectic the bond of the mathematical sciences, as uniting the principles of all of them.

41. But if Socrates asserted that he knew nothing, and the Pythian oracle pronounced him to be on this account the wisest of all men, as he himself informs us, consider the profound meaning both of the Pythian

[1] του ουρανου υπεραστρονομουσα. So Plato.

[2] In decisione lineæ. So Morbeka.

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deity and of Socrates, and how by the assertion of knowing nothing this is implied, that *the good* alone possesses an exempt transcendency,[1] but not he who possesses scientific knowledge; and this it is to know that he does not know. For the attainment of such a knowledge as this appears to be the principal business of those who intend to be wise. For in reality, he is truly wise, who knows that he is not truly wise, and is not ignorant of this. For to whom does it belong to know that he does not scientifically know every thing, but to him who possesses knowledge. For it is indeed necessary that he should perfectly know that he does not know [every thing]; since he will know himself not to possess a scientific knowledge [of all things]. Hence no one will perfectly know that he does not possess scientific knowledge [in perfection], till he knows that he possesses scientific knowledge. For then he will at one and the same time know that he knows, and what the things are which he does not know, and will both know that he knows and that he does not know, possessing a middle knowledge, and science alone, which subsists between those natures that know truth wholly, and those that do not know it at all,[2] of which the former is intellect, but the latter sense. For sense neither knows real, being, nor the essence itself of sensibles, of which it is feigned to be the knowledge; but intellect knows essence itself, and the real truth itself of being.

42. The soul therefore, being a medium between these, knows the essences of things as being prior to sense, and does not know them as being posterior to intellect. He therefore that is wise, will both know that he knows, and that he does not know. And thus much, my friend, in answer to the assertion of Socrates, and concerning that which is real wisdom. Hence, it is not proper to exterminate the reasons pertaining to science, neither on account of the mathematical sciences being distin-

[1] The Greek of this, agreeably to my translation, was I have no doubt τ'αγαθον μονον εξηγημενον ειναι.

[2] "Mediam habens notitiam, et solummodo scientiam, et eorum qui non totaliter." So Morbeka; but the sense requires the following emendation: Mediam habens notitiam, et solummodo scientiam, et eorum qui totaliter, et eorum qui non totaliter.

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guished from the first science, nor on account of the hope of obtaining true knowledge after a separation from hence, nor on account of the answer of the Pythian deity. For it is Plato himself who exclaims, that if science is destroyed, it will no longer be possible to make an assertion about any thing, and not even about that which is contingent. But he shows indeed, what the knowledge is which the soul may assume while it is united to the body, and what it may obtain when it is freed from its bonds; and also what that is which is at the same time knowledge and not science. He likewise shows that there is one knowledge which is true science, an intellect better than science, and an intelligence which deifies intellect; and that the soul perceiving this knowledge, and not being able to obtain it in this life, desires a departure from body, that she may then be allotted this supernatural and divine comprehension of beings. But of these things enough.

43. In consequence however of what you have said, you doubt, why good men are in a worse condition, in consequence of failing to obtain the end which was the object of their wishes, but bad men are allotted the things which they desire. You therefore indeed, think that this also is an argument in favour of the non-existence of any thing which is in our power. And indeed, if this is an argument of the non-existence of any thing in our power, that things do not happen to the good according to their wishes, the success of bad men in gaining the objects of their desire, will be an argument in proof of the existence of something which is in our power. It is better however, not to adduce opposing arguments to what you say, but merely to show you that this doubt was proposed by some of the ancients not only with a view to the subversion of that which is in our power, but also with a view to the investigation whether providence has any existence. And this inquiry of the ancients has been extended to Plotinus himself, to Iamblichus, and your namesake [Theodorus Asinæus]. For the unexpected introduction of fortunate events, shakes in reality our invincible preconceptions of providence, and the affair requires intellectual inspection, if the objector being saved from that doubt, ought to commit every thing to providence.

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44. If therefore, we are not the lords of any thing, and have not an elective life from ourselves, and neither good nor evil is from us, but these are externally produced, there is no longer any occasion to doubt of events, as if they happened contrary to desert, since both good and evil derive their subsistence from an external source. For if we do not cause ourselves to be such characters as we are, it will not be requisite that there should be any retribution for our life; nor in short, is any thing due from those, who are not the causes of the life which they lead. Hence, if the retribution of fortunate events is contrary to desert, we ourselves shall be the cause of the lives, the desert of which it is said we are allotted in the distributions from the universe; because, of all the things that surround us, we do not require to have retribution in what we derive from wholes, but in those things in which we co-operate something. If therefore, there is nothing in our power, we shall have nothing from ourselves. And if this be the case, neither should we desire retributions of those things which we derive from an external source. And this being admitted, neither should we accuse the distribution of events as contrary to desert.

45. If, therefore, there is nothing in our power, it is not fit to enquire why good men fail in obtaining the end they desire, contrary to desert, but bad men obtain this end. But admitting there is something which is in our power, and that Providence has dominion over all things, we say, adducing to you persuasion after violence, that what is in our power does not predominate over, but co-operates with things external. The rational soul therefore very properly disposes things that are internal according to its own power, but it cannot do this with externals, because these require other things in order to their distribution, which are not inherent in it. I am delighted however with these doubts of yours, perceiving in you a generous proselyte whom I frequently desire not to confound those things which are in our power with those which are not, nor to be so disposed with respect to things which are not in our power, as if they ought entirely to take place, in order that we may bear them without difficulty, when they do take place. Now, however, the doubt

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happens, from things which are out of, not conforming themselves to things which are in our power, though we fancy that they ought, and also from supposing that to be good for us which is not, and seeking for its accomplishment. But it would be better for us always to explore the true and real beings that are in us, and acquire them for ourselves, and to leave things external, and which are not in our power to the causes of them, as to masters who know what they do. We should likewise be prepared for those things which are not, by those things which are in our power. In what manner, therefore, the doubt pertains to that which is in our power, we have shown you through such arguments as these. But you ought rather to refer it, as we have said, to the doubt concerning Providence. And many things, as I have before observed, have been said on this subject by the ancients, and they thus solve the doubt.

46. Again, therefore, you inquire what that which is in our power is. Which it was requisite to investigate in the beginning of the discussion. And afterwards you doubt concerning it. But inquiring about it, you define it to be that which is of itself uncircumscribed,[1] and self-energetic. If, however, this be the case, it is entirely incorruptible, and most powerful, and alone pertains to the ruler of all beings, but is not adapted to that which is in our power. I, therefore, consider this definition to be very remote from that conception of what is in our power, which the ancients adopting, attributed this to human souls. But do you also consider the truth of what I say. For they assumed that which is in our power as indicative of the energy of choice, making us to be the lords of choice and aversion, and as indicative of the choice of some good, or the contrary. For they did not consider choice and will to be the same; but they asserted that the latter pertains to good alone, but the former both to good and evil; just as false opinion pertains to that which is not good. Hence also, they said that election or choice characterizes the soul, which extends itself both to what is good, and what is not good, and that this pertains to the middle nature of that being which is

[1] Morbeka has αυτοπεριγραπτον; but it should obviously be αυτοαπεριγραπτον.

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converted to both these. This also common rumour testifies. For we praise the choice of these, but blame the choice of those. Evil, however, is not wished for by any one. And evil indeed appears to be good to those that choose it; for no soul knowing a thing to be evil would choose, but would avoid it. On account of ignorance, however, the soul is busily employed about it; for she naturally possesses an acute love of good, but sometimes is powerless with respect to the attainment of it.

47. The soul, therefore, essentially possessing an inclination to both, viz. to good and evil, the ancients called this power of her elective, on account of which we are naturally adapted to choose one thing instead of another. And indeed, you may obtain from division such a definition of this power. Because all power is either rational or irrational, it is necessary that choice should be in one of these. But since it is not irrational; for we all say that the irrational power is without choice, it will be a certain rational power. But every rational as well as every irrational power, is either gnostic or appetitive. Choice, however, being election and desire, will be a certain appetite. But every appetite either alone looks to that which is real good, or to that which is only apparent good, or to both these. We say, however, that choice does not look to real good alone; for if it did, it would never be justly blamed; nor to apparent good alone; for in this case, it would not frequently be praised. Hence such a power is naturally adapted to look to both these.

48. Election, therefore, is in short, a rational power, desirous both of true and apparent good, leading the soul to both, on account of which she ascends and descends, errs, and acts with rectitude. The ancients perceiving the energy of this power, called the inclination of it both to real and apparent good, a twofold path in our nature. Hence the elective and that which is in our power, will be the same thing. And according to this power, we differ from divine, and from mortal natures; for each of these is unreceptive of this twofold inclination; since the former, indeed, on account of their transcendent excellence are alone established in true good; but the latter on account of defect, in apparent

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good. For intellect indeed characterizes the former, but sense the latter. And the former is our king, but the latter our messenger. We, however, being of a middle nature are established in choice; and are capable of being moved both to true and apparent good. But wherever we move, we are on all sides comprehended by wholes, from which we are allotted what is, according to desert. And if indeed we tend to that which is better, we thus tend as intellect; but if to that which is subordinate, as sense. That which is in our power, therefore, is not capable of effecting all things. For that which can effect all things is a power characterized by unity, and on this account can effect all things, because it is one and boniform. But the power which is elective is dyadic, and on this account cannot accomplish all things; because by its twofold inclinations, it falls short of that nature which is prior to all things. It would, however, be itself effective of all things, if it had not an elective impulse; for then it would be will alone. For a life characterized by will subsists according to good, which causes that which is in our power to be most powerful, and is truly deiform, on account of which the soul also becomes a God, and as Plato says, governs the whole world.

49. Hence that which is in our power, neither pertains to the first, nor to the last of things, but to the medium between both. You, however, as it seems, have conceived it to be a power ruling over all things, leading all things according to its own impulse, and obtaining every thing which it desires; for you do not define it to be a power over the objects of desire within the soul, and which cause the electing soul to be such as it is; but you ascribe to it a power over things which are not in its power. For things external to the soul are not in our power; on which account also our life is mingled from things which are not, and from things which are in our power. And with worthy men, indeed, there is much of that which is in our power; for they use all things, modifying even those that are out of our power on account of virtue, and always adorning the present circumstance. But with the multitude, there is more of that which is not in our power; for they follow things external to themselves, not possessing a life within, which is able to assimilate them

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to themselves. Hence worthy men, indeed, are said to be free, and are so on account of the energy both of that which is in, and of that which is not in their power. But the multitude are called into servile necessity, in consequence of burying those things which are in their power, with those that are not, and possessing all things not in themselves.

50. After all this, you have added the colophon (or summit) of the doubts, by asking whether divinity knows or does not know events which are future to us. And if, indeed, he does not know them, you will say that he does not at all differ from us, who have no knowledge of futurity. But if he does know them, that which he knows will entirely and from necessity come to pass. This, however, as it would seem, not only destroys that which is in our power, but likewise every thing which is said to be contingent. This also, is usually said by those who conceive all things to exist by compulsion, and as I may say, has been asserted a thousand times. But they all reason as follows: if divinity knows every future event, that which is future will be from necessity. And they indeed assert it to be false that divinity knows every thing definitely; but they say that his knowledge is indefinite of things which indefinitely come to pass, in order that they may save what is contingent. Others, however, attributing a definite knowledge to divinity, admit necessity in every thing which comes to pass. These are the dogmas of the Peripatetic and Stoic sects. But Plato, and whoever is a friend to Plato, affirm that divinity definitely knows future events, and that nevertheless [1] some things are produced definitely, and others indefinitely, according to their respective natures. For those things which in effects subsist with division and contrarily, are antecedently comprehended in the Gods according to a more excellent condition only.

51. I say, for instance, the causes of generated natures, whether they are incorporeal or corporeal, subsist incorporeally with the Gods; and in a similar manner their knowledge is incorporeal. And again, the

[1] Morbeka has *contra* here, instead of *nihilominus*.

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causes of intellectual, and of non-intellectual beings, subsist with the Gods both essentially, and according to science. For they also know things which are not intellectual intellectually. And again, of things which are produced by them, that are either temporal or without time, there is with them a cause and a knowledge exempt from time. Hence because of effects some are definite, but others indefinite, the Gods antecedently assume the knowledge of both these according to the more excellent mode, viz. according to the definite. Moreover, the form of knowledge is not such as the object of knowledge, but such as the gnostic nature. For knowledge is not in that which is known, but in that which knows. Hence, it is similar and of the like form to that in which it is, and not to that in which it is not. If, therefore, that which is known is indefinite, but that which knows it is definite, the knowledge is not also indefinite on account of the thing known, but definite on account of that which knows. For it is possible to know that which is subordinate after a more excellent mode, and that which is supreme after an inferior mode.

52. Hence, because the Gods are better than all things, they antecedently comprehend all things after a more excellent mode. And beings indeed, they comprehend super-essentially ;[1] things which are according to time, as we have already said, prior to time ; corporeal natures, incorporeally ; material natures immaterially ; definitely, things indefinite ; permanently, things unstable ; and ingenerably, things generable. It does not, therefore, follow that if they know what will be, the event must happen from necessity ; but to the event indeed we must give an indefinite generation from a definite cause, and to the Gods a definite foreknowledge of that which is indefinite. For neither does it follow that because your art[2] employs drums and wheels, and corporeal materials, these subsisted corporeally in your foreknowledge ; but your imagination comprehended in itself incorporeally and vitally the productive principle

[1] *Superessentialiter* is omitted here in the version of Morbeka.

[2] "Neque enim tua fictio," should be, neque enim si tua factio, (i. e. ars mechanica).

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of the future machine; and the astrolabe was corporeally fashioned from an internal knowledge which is not corporeal. If this, however, is the case in your art, what ought you to say of the foreknowledge of the Gods, in which all things subsist in a manner truly ineffable, and not to be circumscribed by us? Is it not evident, that this mode of comprehension is different from, and in no respect allied to the things which are produced by it? Hence the Gods know divinely, and in a way unaccompanied by time those things which are in our power, and we energize, as we are naturally adapted. Whatever we choose also, is foreknown by them, not on account of the boundary which is in us, but on account of the boundary which is with them.

Such, my friend, is my answer to your inquiries, independent of which I am able to show you that there is something in our power, from praise and blame, from counsel, from exhortation and dehortation, from judicial affairs, from accusation and defence, from all political erudition, from legislation, from prayer, from sacerdotal methods, and from philosophy itself. For you well know that my preceptor [Syrianus,] used frequently to say, that if that which is in our power were destroyed, philosophy would be superfluous. For what should it instruct, when there is nothing which can be instructed, when there is nothing in us by which we may become better? Reconsidering, therefore, these things again and again, if you still have any doubts, do not be averse to write to me. For what subjects can we more aptly discuss than those, in the disquisition of which no one will accuse us of nugacity?

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